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Opening Statement Rep. Curt Weldon
Chairman, Military Research and Development Subcommittee
Hearing on Army Modernization

I join with Mr. Hunter in welcoming today's witnesses, Secretary Hoyer, Lieutenant General Kern, and Dr. Andrews. Thank you for being with us today and I'm looking forward to your testimony.

As we examine the Army's modernization efforts contained in the fiscal year 2001 budget request, I look forward to much of today's testimony being very positive. I do want to more closely examine some of the issues and concerns that Members have raised recently, and that I believe are shared by both of these subcommittees.

During the past five years, the House Armed Services Committee, under Chairman Floyd Spence's leadership, has led a bi-partisan effort to increase defense spending by over \$43 billion in order to address a portion of the unfunded requirements identified each year by the service chiefs.

However, it has been a continual source of frustration for Members that the Department has not acknowledged any negative impacts resulting from the steady decline in requests for R&D funding.

I want to commend the Army for providing members with important insights into the impacts on Army readiness and modernization caused by the unacceptably low defense budget requests of the past five years. I believe that the "bad news" resulting from the "modernization train wreck" appears to have already happened in R&D, as well as in procurement, and the Army's tough choices of canceling seven modernization programs and severely cutting back several others including Crusader are only the "early casualty figures" confirming our concerns.

The Army has also initiated an important shift in its modernization efforts. Secretary Caldera and General Shinseki are leading a major new effort to transform a portion of the Army into a more rapidly deployable, highly mobile and more versatile medium weight force to better respond to our changing and uncertain national security needs. I am encouraged by the Army's bold new transformation, but disturbed by the lack of evidence of real support for this initiative from the Department of Defense.

I find it difficult to understand how the Army will be able to sustain all of the required sustainment of today's forces and also complete this much needed transformation while only receiving 16% of the Department's modernization funding. It is clear that the Army portion of the Defense modernization budget continues to trail the other services and even defense-wide agencies by a significant margin. I recently provided members a chart describing the Army, Air Force, Navy & Marine Corps share of this year's total \$98 billion modernization request. I found it quite disturbing that the Army is attempting to initiate a major transformation of its forces with only 16% of this \$98 billion while the other services control over twice that much modernization funding. Today's hearing will provide Members of both subcommittees an opportunity to discuss their concerns.

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